

Message Text

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ACTION EPA-02

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 OES-03 /016 W

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R 141245Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: TPHY OSCI SENV EG

SUBJECT: EPA/EGYPTIAN CONSIDERATION OF PROJECT
ON UTILIZATION OF SLUDGE

REF: STATE 182659

1. EMBOFF MET WITH MINAGR OFFICIALS DR. SHABASY AND DR. ALI SIRRI AUG 12 TO DISCUSS PROPOSAL FOR PROJECT ON UTILIZATION OF SLUDGE. (DR. SIRRI, SOIL INSTITUTE DIRECTOR, WILL HEAD GROUP WORKING ON EPA PROPOSAL.) EMBOFF HAD PREVIOUSLY TRANSMITTED QUESTIONS CONTAINED PARAS 3, 4, 5 AND 6 REFTEL TO DR. SHABASY. BOTH SHABASY AND SIRRI BELIEVE THAT COMPILATION OF DATA REQUESTED AND PREPARATION OF PROPOSAL WILL TAKE APPROXIMATELY 6 WEEKS. DR. SIRRI IS PREPARING LIST OF QUESTIONS FOR EPA WHICH WILL BE SUBMITTED WEEK OF AUG 18. DR. SHABASY SUGGESTED THAT IN VIEW OF QUESTIONS WHICH EGYPTIAN SIDE HAS, EPA WORKING GROUP SHOULD COME TO CAIRO IN SECOND WEEK OF OCT TO PURSUE MATTER FURTHER. HE THINKS THAT ANSWERS TO ALL QUESTIONS, INCLUDING THOSE REIASED REFTEL, WOULD BE DISCUSSED AT THAT TIME.

2. DR. SHABASY MADE IT CLEAR THAT MINAGR IS STILL INTERESTED IN IDEA AND FULLY INTENDS TO DEVELOP VIABLE PROJECT ALONG WITH EPA. SHABASY SAID THAT IN OCT EGYPTIANS WOULD BE PREPARED TO COME TO A FINAL AGREEMENT. HE ALSO REMINDED US THAT IT IS HIS UNDERSTANDING EGYPT WILL PROVIDE LABOARATORY FACILITIES, RESEARCHERS, AND LAND, BUT THAT ALL COSTS OF SLUDGE TRANSPORTATION, HANDLING AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES WILL BE BORNE BY EPA.

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3. MAJOR EGYPTIAN CONCERN IS HANDLING OF SLUDGE. THERE ARE AT PRESENT NO REPEAT NO FACILITIES IN PORT OF ALEXANDRIA, THE ONLY PORT AVAILABLE TO RECEIVE SLUDGE, AND MINAGR POSSESSES NO CAPABILITY TO OFFLOAD AND TRANSPORT IT TO PROJECT SITE. SHABASY SUGGESTED THAT PART OF PROJECT AGREEMENT WOULD BE EPA'S PROVISION TWO OR THREE TANKER TRUCKS, WHICH IT NORMALLY USES TO HAUL SLUDGE FROM PROCESSING SITE TO DUMPING SITE, ON FIRST SHIP CARRYING SLUDGE TO EGYPT. TRUCKS COULD THEN BE USED FOR TRANSPORT FROM SHIP TO PROJECT SITE. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THIS IS REASONABLE SUGGESTION. HOWEVER, PROBLEM OF STORAGE- IN THIS CASE AT SITE - STILL REMAINS.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: IN REPLY TO PROPOSAL FOR OCT MEETING, EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE EPA DESCRIBING FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS AND GIVING INDICATION IF TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS MENTIONED PARA 3 COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE. IDEAS ON HOW TO COPE WITH STORAGE PROBLEM WOULD ALSO BE WELCOME.

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5. COMMENT: AS DEPT WILL APPRECIATE, THE PUBLIC RELATIONS ASPECT OF THIS PROSPECT NEED SOME CAREFUL CONSIDERATION. WITH HEAVY CONGRESSIONAL AND PRESS SCRUTINY OF ALL EXPENDITURES IN EGYPT, WE WANT TO BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT ALL ASPECTS OF SLUDGE RESEARCH PROJECT ARE CAREFULLY PRESENTED TO APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORITIES AND DOMESTIC PRESS AND THAT WE WILL RUN NO RISK OF ADVERSE PUBLICITY. EGYPTIANS ARE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT PROJECT FROM SCIENTIFIC STANDPOINT AND BELIEVE THAT RESULTS OF RESEARCH WILL BE POSITIVE.

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